

INFORMATION,
PREVENTION AND
TREATMENT REFERRALS, AND
OTHER RESOURCES ARE
AVAILABLE 24 HOURS A DAY
FROM THE MASSACHUSETTS
SUBSTANCE ABUSE
INFORMATION AND
EDUCATION HELPLINE/
THE MEDICAL FOUNDATION.

800-327-5050
(TOLL-FREE; MULTI-LINGUAL)
TTY: 617-536-5872
WWW.HELPLINE-ONLINE.COM

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
AND STATISTICS ARE
AVAILABLE FROM:

- Massachusetts Youth Health Survey, October 2002
www.state.ma.us/dph/bsas
- Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey
www.doe.mass.edu/hssss/yrbs/01/results.pdf
- National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University
www.casacolumbia.org
- Monitoring the Future, Overview of Key Findings 2002
www.monitoringthefuture.org
- Office of National Drug Control Policy
www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov
- Parents. The Anti Drug
www.theantidrug.com
- Partnership for a Drug-Free America
www.drugfreeamerica.org
- U. S. Department of Health and Human Services
www.health.org

Be the first to **TALK WITH YOUR PRE-TEEN**
about ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, and other DRUGS

INFORMATION FOR FAMILIES

PRE-TEENS and DRUG USE

► **MANY ADULTS ARE SURPRISED TO LEARN THAT IN MASSACHUSETTS:**

- More than 25% of 8th graders have used alcohol.
- Nearly 8% have used marijuana.
- 20% of students have smoked their first cigarette before age 13.

► **DURING THE MIDDLE-SCHOOL YEARS, CHILDREN:**

- Change in many ways that may be confusing for them and for their families
- Become more independent and begin to care more about what their friends think (peer pressure)
- May try alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs for the first time

The middle-school years are an important time when parents and other caring adults can help children make healthy choices. Talking, guiding, and staying involved are powerful things you can do for your child.

WHAT CAN I DO TO PREVENT SUBSTANCE ABUSE?

Research has shown that parents and other caring adults play an important role in preventing substance abuse.

- Teens who learn anti-drug messages at home are 42% less likely to use drugs.
- 33% of young people say that losing their parents' respect and pride is one of the main reasons they don't use drugs.

It's important to remember that your children are listening to you even though they may not show it. Research shows, and young people confirm, that:

- Children want you to set rules even though they may act angry or say their friends' parents are not as strict.
- What you think is still important, though they may seem to care more about the opinions of friends.
- Your children need you now more than ever.

► **WHAT CAN I DO?**

- Accept that every child—including your own—is at risk for substance abuse.
- Be involved. Spend time with your child. Eat meals together whenever possible. Spend time alone together on a regular basis.
- Learn how you can help your child grow up healthy and safe. This booklet contains tips and suggestions that you can try or adapt.
- Connect with your community (see "What Can I Do in My Community?").
- Make healthy decisions for yourself, especially about tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs. Pre-teens still learn the most from their parents.